

And finally, let me say, we have to continue our work to preserve our environment. There are still 10 million American children who live within 4 miles of a toxic waste dump. If you give us 4 more years we'll close 500 more so our kids will be growing up next to parks, not poison. Will you help us build that bridge to the 21st century? Will you ignore the rain for 6 more weeks and 5 more days and ask your friends and neighbors to support us and to build a bridge to the future?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Thank you, Tacoma. Don't lose your energy. Don't lose your enthusiasm. Bear down. We need you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:52 a.m. at the Tacoma Dome. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Brian Ebersole of Tacoma and Bridget Woods, student body vice president, Lincoln High School.

Remarks in Yelm City, Washington September 19, 1996

The President. Hello, Yelm, hello! Wow! Thank you for coming. Thank you. I love your signs. Thanks for the Arkansas sign out there; that was nice. I want to thank the band for being here, and the choral group. [Applause] There you are. And I want to say when I finish speaking—this group has written a song, they want to play it for us. And so they've got a little microphone over there, and I want us to listen to their song. These kids have done so much work, I think we should listen to them and give them a little support.

Let me also tell you that I am delighted to be here. I thank you for your warm welcome. I cannot believe the size of this crowd. What's the population of this community? Two thousand?

Audience member. Two people.

The President. No, not two people—I know that. Now, come on.

Let me also say to all of you that I'm honored to be here with the Vice President and Hillary and Tipper, with our good friend Gary Locke, who will be a great Governor of Washington if you will help him for the next 6 weeks and 5 days.

And I want to say that I'm just getting acquainted with Washington State's primary system, but as I understand it, you throw everybody in and let them run. And I was really impressed that our candidate for Congress here, Adam Smith, got more votes than the incumbent Congressman. And I'd like to ask him to come up here and just say a word of hello to you. Adam, come here.

[At this point, Mr. Smith, candidate for Washington's Ninth Congressional District, made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am so glad to be here today. I'm glad to be back in Washington State. I told the big crowd—we had a huge crowd in Tacoma this morning, and I told them that yesterday and today, of all the times I've been to Washington, yesterday and today are the only times it has ever rained on me in Washington State. Now I feel like you've finally taken me in as one of your own now that it's raining on me like it rains on you all the time. And I thank you.

Four years ago we came to Washington State and asked you to support our efforts to change this country. We asked you to take us on faith. We said that we could bring hope back to America, that history was giving us a remarkable opportunity to change this country for the better, that we did not have to put up with the conditions as they were, high unemployment, stagnant growth, stagnant wages, rising crime, a dividing country, a more cynical country.

And I can tell you that after 4 years this country is in better shape than it was 4 years ago. We are on the right track to the 21st century. Ten and a half million more Americans have jobs; 4½ million more Americans have their own homes; 12 million Americans have been able to take some time off from work without losing their jobs when a baby was born or a parent was sick because of the family leave law; 10 million Americans will get an increase

in their pay on October 1st, when the minimum wage law goes into effect; 25 million Americans will have a chance to keep their health insurance because of the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill that says you can't have your health insurance jerked or denied because someone in your family has been sick or because you changed jobs. This country is moving in the right direction.

The Government's deficit has been cut by 60 percent. It's gone down 4 years in a row for the first time since before the Civil War. The crime rate has gone down for 4 years in a row. The welfare rolls have been reduced by 1.8 million. Child support collections have been increased by 40 percent—\$3 billion. And there are one million fewer crime victims than there were last year. We are moving in the right direction toward the 21st century.

And I want to ask you to help America make the right decision between building a bridge to the future and reaching back to build a bridge to the past, between saying that "you're on your own and we hope you do fine, the Government's always your enemy," and saying "it takes a village—yes, the First Lady is right—it does take a village to raise our children, to build strong communities, to build strong businesses, to build a strong country. And we're going to go forward together into the 21st century."

I want to ask you to help me build a bridge to the 21st century that all of us can walk across by saying, first of all, we're going to have the finest educational opportunities in the world for all of our children, no matter where they live, in little towns or big cities. I want you to help me mobilize an army of reading tutors to go out and help parents and schools, to make sure that we change the conditions that exist today where 40 percent of the 8-year-olds in this country cannot read independently. In the year 2000 I want us to be able to say any 8-year-old in America can take out a book and say, "I can read this all by myself." And we can do that.

I want us to make a commitment that we will hook up every classroom and every library in every school in the United States to the information superhighway, to the Internet, to the World Wide Web, so that children can say, "No matter whether we live in small towns or big cities, whether our districts are rich, middle class, or poor, for the first time in history we all have access to the same information at the same time in the same way. America's education

system finally is truly equal for all America's children." I want you to help me do that.

I want us to be able to say that we have opened the doors of college education to every single person who is willing to work hard and do well—every American without regard to age or income should be able to go. How are we going to do that? Let people save through an IRA and then withdraw without penalty to spend it on a college education. Make the first 2 years of college in a community college as universal in 4 years as a high school diploma is today by saying you can take off the cost of the typical community college tuition right off your tax bill, dollar for dollar—a tax credit to educate people for 2 years. Finally, give people a \$10,000 tax deduction for the cost of all college tuition. That will build this country; it will strengthen us; it will open opportunity for everybody. Will you help us build that bridge to the 21st century? *[Applause]*

The second thing we have to do, folks, is keep this economy growing strong. I want to have the right kind of tax cut, one that is targeted to education, to childrearing, to health care costs, to buying the first-time home; we're not imposing taxes on people if they sell their home for a gain. But I want these things paid for because we still have to balance the budget without bankrupting Medicare, Medicaid, or turning our backs on education and the environment. We have to invest in our future and honor our obligations to the people that share this country with us. And I want you to help me build that kind of bridge to the 21st century. I hope you will do that.

I want you to help me build a bridge to the 21st century where we move people from welfare to work and every able-bodied person now on welfare is working. But we have to create the jobs to do it. I have a plan to work with your new Governor to put a million jobs in America to move people from welfare to work. And I want you to help me build that kind of bridge. We want to lift these kids up in poor families and lift their families up and let them succeed at home and at work, just the way you're struggling to do. And I want you to help me build that kind of bridge.

I want you to help me build a bridge to continue our fight to reduce the crime rate. Yes, there are one million fewer victims. Yes, crime has gone down for 4 years. But it's still too big, it's still too much trouble, there are

still too many of our children in gangs, too many of our children turning to drugs, too much random violence. And I want you to help me finish the job to complete putting 100,000 police on the street, to defeat those in Congress who tried to cut our safe and drug-free schools program, to do what we can to make this a stronger country.

You know, 2 years ago, the State of Washington, in this congressional district and others, led the country in embracing Mr. Gingrich's Republican revolution. He told you two things that weren't so. He said that we'd raised all these income taxes on working people, and we were going to break the economy. Well, 10½ million jobs later, we know he was wrong. We've got the lowest unemployment rate in 7½ years.

He said their contract on America would make a better place. And then they shut the Government down when we refused to let them wreck the Medicare program, break Medicaid's commitments to the old, the poor, the disabled, and cut education and environmental protection at a time when it's most important, along with raising taxes on 9 million hard-pressed working families. When we said no to that, you knew that there was no revolution, that it was a reaction. And we didn't like it, and we weren't going to put up with it.

And they didn't tell you about the fine print of their contract on America when they ran in 1994. Then they said in the area of crime, "We're going to be tougher on crime." But what did they try to do? What did they try to do? They tried to turn back on our commitment to put 100,000 police on the street. They tried to destroy our safe and drug-free schools program. They tried to eliminate the things that poor kids can say yes to like summer jobs. They opposed the assault weapons ban.

And they told you that the Brady bill was going to take guns away from Washington hunters. Well, guess what, folks. It's been 2 years, and we've got some friends in the loyal opposition here in the crowd, and I welcome them here. I'm glad they're here. But we ought to ask them, when you told people to elect all these Congressmen in Washington, that these guys were going to lose their guns, how come we've been through two hunting seasons and all the Washington hunters still have their guns but the crime rate has gone down?

I'll tell you who doesn't have guns, the 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers who couldn't get handguns because of the Brady bill. This is a

safer country in the last 4 years because of our crime program, and they fought it.

I want you to help us build a bridge to the 21st century with strong families and strong, clean communities. I am proud of the fact that we passed the family leave law, but I think people should be able to get a little time off from work to go to those regular appointments with their children's teachers or to take their parents to the doctor on a regular basis. That won't bankrupt the economy. It will make us stronger. I ask you to help me build a country with stronger families.

I want you to help me see through our efforts to stop the tobacco companies from selling to-bacco and marketing it to our children. It's illegal. I want you to help me see through our efforts to protect the safe and drug-free school programs. I want you to help me see through our efforts to get more hours of children's educational programming on television and give parents the V-chip and a rating system so they can control the programs their younger children see. I want you to help me build strong families. Will you help me build that kind of bridge to the 21st century? [*Applause*]

And finally, I want you to help me prove that we can build a strong economy and preserve our environment. Just 2 days ago we reached an agreement to preserve the old-growth forests in Washington and Oregon, and timber jobs are up in the last 4 years since I've been President, not down. We reached an agreement to restore the salmon on the Columbia River in ways that will help the economy and preserve our natural heritage. Yesterday we preserved 1.7 million acres in southern Utah, the Cascade-Escalante national monument. It's important.

We are going to have cleaner air, safer drinking water, purer food, because this administration believes that we don't have to roll back 25 years of bipartisan commitment to environmental protection; we should build on it.

Folks, we can grow the economy of Washington State by preserving the environment in a smart way. And so I ask you—let me just give you one example. We've cleaned up more toxic dumps in 3 years than were cleaned up in 12 years before us. But 10 million American children—look at these children here—10 million children still live within 4 miles of a toxic waste dump. If you will give us 4 more years, we'll

clean up 500 more, and we can say, "Our kids in America, they're growing up next to parks, not poison." That's the bridge we want to build to the 21st century.

So that's the choice. For 6 weeks and 5 days, the Vice President and Hillary and Tipper and I, we're committed to making this a campaign of ideas, not insults. We don't want to ask who's to blame; we want to ask, what are we going to do about it?

And we want to ask you, each and every one of you, to give us 6 weeks and 5 days of hard effort, talking to your friends and neighbors about what this election is about. It's about what these children will have in America when they are our age. It's about what we will be like

when we charge into the 21st century. It's about whether we're going forward with opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a sense of community in this country that says, if you believe in the principles of the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Bill of Rights, if you're willing to work hard and be responsible, we're going to build a bridge to the 21st century that you can walk across with us, hand in hand, arm in arm. A good future, the best days are still to come.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:28 p.m. at Yelm City Park.

Remarks in Centralia, Washington September 19, 1996

The President. Thank you.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you so much. Thank you for waiting for us. Thank you for making us feel so very welcome. What a beautiful, beautiful community this is. I love this street. I love these stores. I love all your signs. We do feel welcome to your village, and we're glad you're here with us to build that bridge to the 21st century. Thank you.

I want to say a special word of thanks to the mayor and the other local officials. Thank you to the two bands that played so well for us. Thank you very, very much. Thank you, John Simpson, for your welcome and for the power of your life's example. Now, when I leave town I will not have taken any money off you in a poker game, but I hope that won't weaken your support for the Clinton/Gore ticket. We're proud of you. Thank you, sir.

And thank you, Gary Locke, not only for running for Governor but for the good, positive, constructive, progressive, future-oriented campaign that you ran and that you will run. Ladies and gentlemen, the partnership between the National Government and the States is critical and will be more critical in the next few years. We're reforming the welfare laws, for example, and giving the States the power to design programs for able-bodied people on welfare to have to

work in return for support for their children. You want people who care about those kids, who want to bring those folks into the mainstream, who have both compassion as well as a strong work ethic. I think you know who should be the next Governor of the State of Washington, Gary Locke.

Let me also say a special word of thanks to the Vice President for what he said about the fight we had last year with the leaders of Congress—with Speaker Gingrich and Senator Dole and those who were committed to their Contract With America. I remember well in 1994 when they went across the country and they won the Congress back. They won as many seats in the State of Washington, including this one, as in any State in the country. And they said a few clear things. They said, "We have this Contract With America, and it will move America forward." They neglected to say they wanted to cut education, they wanted to weaken the environment, they wanted to raise taxes on the poorest working people, they wanted to permit people to raid their workers' pension funds, they wanted to abolish AmeriCorps, abolish our student loan program, abolish the safe and drug-free schools program. They wanted to turn Medicare into a two-tier system. They wanted to stop Medicaid's guarantee of health care to poor